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# The Tragedy . . the Jews in the European War Zone

BY

LEON LEVISON

HON. SECRETARY, RUSSIAN JEWS RELIEF FUND



TENTH EDITION

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## Great Britain to the Jews in Russia and Poland.

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# THE TRAGEDY OF THE JEWS IN THE EUROPEAN WAR ZONE.

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**A** COMMITTEE has been formed to raise a National Relief Fund for the benefit of Jews in Russia and Poland, where the distress due to the War is very great. There are ten million Jews affected by this War, out of a total number of thirteen million. The majority of them live in Russia and Poland, Galicia, and East Prussia—in fact, from the borders of Rumania on the one side right up to the Baltic on the other. There are six and a half million Jews under the Russian Government, two and a quarter million in Austria Hungary, and over six hundred thousand in Germany and East Prussia. At the outbreak of the War, the Russian Government gave instructions to the Army to treat, with the utmost courtesy, Jews and Christians alike. This was done to the best of the Russian Army's ability. Owing to the restrictions in Russia, the Jews are allowed to live only in limited areas. These at present really form the War zones. It will therefore be clearly seen that the terrible sufferings of these Jews are similar to those of the Belgians, but to a far greater extent. The feeling towards the Jews in Russia in the past has been anything but friendly. At the best of times massacres have taken place, and not very long ago, there was a pogrom in Keshineff and Bjalestok, and other cities. At the beginning of the War the Russians promised the Poles what we term Home Rule, and also to establish that country on its olden basis. The Polish people have taken this promise very much to heart, and are looking forward with high hopes to its fulfilment. Meanwhile they are taking into consideration that in that kingdom will be found no fewer than nine

million Jews whose influence in matters of State will have to be reckoned with.

### **Germans invade Poland.**

When the Germans invaded Poland, all the Jewish houses were looted and emptied of everything valuable, and scores of hostages were taken in every city from amongst them, including the heads of the communities; while in a large number of towns unspeakable atrocities, worse even than those perpetrated at Louvaine in Belgium, took place. This time the instigators of these crimes were the Germans. Jewish women and girls were outraged, and the hardships and sufferings of the people generally are simply indescribable. When the Russians came back and drove the Germans out, the Jewish haters in Poland had a great opportunity to keep the massacres going. They informed the Russian soldiers that their last retreat was due to Jewish treachery, and accused the Jews of being spies in German pay. Naturally, the Russian soldier who had lost his comrade during the retreat, without reflection avenged his comrade's death upon the poor Jew, and a constant massacre has been going on at the hands both of friend and foe. At each advance of the Germans the Poles, to gain their favour, told them the same old story about their last retreat being due to the Jews, and so things go on. This has been authenticated and vouched for by Mr Baron of the "Hebrew Christian Testimony to the Jews," London. Paderewski, appealing on behalf of his compatriots, writes: "Since the opening of the War these armies have passed back and forth across Poland seven times, until it has become necessary for the inhabitants to live on the bark of trees, and such food as can be found in the woods. In every case this is unfit for even animals to eat."

### **Jews Fighting for the Allies.**

The first Cross of the Order of St George's in Russia has been won by a Jewish student and since then over



400 Jews have won that distinction. In the British Army Jews have won 3 V.C.'s, 10 D.C.M.'s, 3 D.S.O.'s and 3 Military Crosses, and have contributed to the Casualty Lists some 300 killed and 700 wounded. Numerous Orders have been conferred upon Jews in the French Army for their great and heroic deeds, while Jews have also obtained distinction in the Italian, Belgian, and Serbian Armies.

The half a million soldiers of the Jewish race who are fighting for the Allies make whole-hearted, brave, and dauntless combatants. Those who fight for the Teutonic Powers and for the Ottoman Empire do so unwillingly and under compulsion. Is it not a supreme duty that Christian Britain, a nation which owes its religion entirely to the Jews, should use every means, and make every sacrifice possible to alleviate the terrible distress that the Jews are now suffering in this time of trouble?

### The War's Greatest Tragedy.

The following are the official statistics with regard to the number of Jews in the different countries, and the number of Jews in the different armies, which illustrate the tragedy of the Jewish race having to fight against one another, for no other reason than to serve the country of their adoption:

Russia	.	.	6,200,000 Jews in the country. 400,000 Jews in the Army.
Austria	.	.	1,313,087 Jews in the country. 100,000 Jews in the Army.
Hungary	.	.	952,410 Jews in the country. 70,000 Jews in the Army.
Germany	.	.	615,029 Jews in the country. 40,000 Jews in the Army.
France	.	.	100,000 Jews in the country. 18,000 Jews in the Army.
Serbia	.	.	15,730 Jews in the country. 2,500 Jews in the Army.

Belgium . . .	15,000 Jews in the country. 2,600 Jews in the Army.
Great Britain . .	250,000 Jews in the country. 17,000 Jews in the Army.
Canada . . .	150,000 Jews in the country. 2,500 Jews in the Army.
Australia . . .	20,000 Jews in the country. 1,500 Jews in the Army.
Morocco . . .	109,712 Jews in the country. 5,000 Jews in the Army.
Algeria . . .	46,000 Jews in the country. 2,000 Jews in the Army.
India . . .	20,980 Jews in the country. 2,000 Jews in the Army.
Italy . . .	150,000 Jews in the country. 18,000 Jews in the Army.
Bulgaria . . .	20,000 Jews in the country. 2,000 Jews in the Army.

The above figures appeared in the "Missionary Review of the World," December 1914 issue. Since then three more classes of reservists have been called up in Russia, which increases to 480,000 the number of Jews in their Army alone. A similar increase has since taken place in Hungary, Germany, France, and practically all the other countries.

Then the "Jews Era" which is published quarterly in Chicago, gives the following statistics with regard to the Jews in Turkey involved in the War:—

Turkey in Europe . . .	80,000 Jews.
Palestine . . . . .	100,000 Jews.
Mesopotamia . . . . .	60,000 Jews.
Arabia . . . . .	25,000 Jews.
Asia Minor . . . . .	80,000 Jews and 40,000 Jews in the Army.

### Widespread Destruction.

We learn from the reports of the American Commission and from statements made by Paderewski, that over 200 towns and cities, some as large as Brussels and Antwerp, have been practically ruined, while over 11,000 villages have been razed to the ground. In many cases nothing but

heaps of stones are left to show that they once existed. Naturally many non-combatants have been injured and killed, and from the Jewish press we learn that the loss of life has been great, and the suffering of the survivors appalling. Last winter was bad enough; but the mortality among old people and young children due to sheer starvation is at present terribly great. Moreover, the Germans have been lately using great quantities of poisonous gases, and innocent civilians and children have in this way been poisoned by the thousand.

### **The Condition of the Jews in Russia and Poland.**

For many months after the outbreak of the European War, very little news concerning the civilian population in Poland and Western Russia filtered through to Great Britain. In the early days of the great War, while the Russian armies were successful, news and letters came from Warsaw and other large towns in Polish and Russian territory. We were told of the misery prevailing in the districts where the German armies took up their lines, and some rather meagre accounts of atrocities and outrages, similar to those on the Belgian front, were reported. It was pointed out in Jewish newspapers that the Jewish population in Poland were among the most unfortunate of all the innocent victims of the War. They were disliked by the people among whom they dwelt, and regarded as an "undesirable alien population" by the Government to whom they owed allegiance. More particularly was this the case in Russian Poland, where memories of "Pogroms" were still vivid; and it was a favourite device for trying to win the approval of the ruling authorities, to bring forward accusations of "spying" or "assisting the enemy" against the unfortunate Jews who had no means of defending themselves. Some unpopular or possibly prominent members of the Jewish community were singled out for these accusations, merely because they were Jews, in utter disregard of evidence, while others were frequently condemned to imprisonment or death.

### **Plunder of Jewish Towns.**

Then, in the fluctuating fortunes of the enormously long lines of battle, certain towns or districts were taken



over by the military Commanders of either hostile force, and the first unfortunate persons to have their homes desecrated, their property stolen, and their lives cruelly sacrificed, were the irresponsible Jewish population. It can be easily understood that there was no central or local authority, military or civil, which would care to take charge of these "aliens." They had no rights of citizenship nor national standing like natives of the country, Russians, Poles, Germans or Austrians; they merely existed on sufferance as a despised and troublesome people, and on Russian soil the restrictive laws compelled them to live only within the Pale of Settlement. Now this "Pale" lies exactly in the Eastern War-zone, and it is these vast border provinces and their towns, the names of which are so harsh in our ears, and so unpronounceable to our lips, that are inhabited by nearly ten millions of the Jewish race. All the men of military age were, of course, commandeered for either the Russian or German army, according to whichever side of the boundary line they resided in. Now and again it chanced that brothers or near relatives were compelled to fight against each other, thus bringing the horrors of civil war upon a quiet, industrious, and unoffending people.

### **Horrors of Civil War brought upon the Jews.**

The reason for this is easy to explain. In adjacent provinces, what is more likely than that one or two brothers of a family residing, say, across the Russian border, might, in view of better business facilities, or for other reasons, travel to a town not many miles away, and settle down there inside the German frontier. Here, if successful in their enterprise, they might possibly take a German name, and become naturalized as Germans, all the time keeping up friendly intercourse with their relatives in Russia. Imagine the state of things in this island, should the calamity of civil war between England and Scotland occur! Even then the parallel is scarcely to be drawn, for in all probability some great cause or dogma (as in our Seventeenth Century conflict) would be at stake, and men would fight according to their convictions. Not so with the unfortunate Jews of to-day. It is not because of the call of religion, political principles, loyalty to the person of a sovereign or leader, that they are called to arms, but



simply because they are numbered among the population of nations of quite a different origin, and fight they must, for Governments which have never been anything but oppressive and cruel to them as a people. This applies particularly to the German Government and to the Russian in the past; also to the Turkish Government, which compels Jews to fight in their armies on every front. With regard to the French, Belgian, and British Governments, the case is quite otherwise; the Jews fight whole-heartedly for those who have shown them kindness and have given them civil and political rights.

Since the Russians have extended the privileges of nationality, and loosened some of their restrictive laws, the Jews on the Russian front have also fought nobly and gallantly for the Czar; in fact, realising that Russia is now an Ally of their supreme friend, Great Britain, the Jews in the ranks are among the bravest and most whole-hearted of the splendid and self-sacrificing army of Russia, of which we have all heard so many great and valiant deeds.

### **Civilian Jewish Population.**

Now for the condition of their wives and children, their parents and their elderly relatives. These families all living along the line of the eastern frontier battles, and in those western parts of Russia that have been over-run by the "Modern Huns"—these most destitute of people have been rendered absolutely homeless and starving. Unlike the Belgians there was for them no Isle of Britain at hand to which they could flee where kindness and philanthropy awaited them. As the homeless Jews flocked eastwards they necessarily came into other provinces of Russia almost as poor as the devastated lands they had left, where the unfortunate peasants, whose male supporters had all gone to the war, had no means, even if they had the will, to give assistance to over two millions of destitute refugees! For, as we cannot but remember, Jews are not the only sufferers on this gigantic war-zone.

### **Sufferings of the Native Russian Population.**

Russians, Poles, Lithuanians, and the natives of all these large districts which are the regions of the bitterest

conflicts the world has ever seen, have also been deprived of their homes and their goods, and how natural that the first sympathy and help that the Russians could afford to bestow, should be extended towards their own fellow-countrymen! The inhabitants of the more central provinces of Russia that have so far escaped the horrors of war, have done their utmost to relieve distress, and all honour to those of the Slav race who have sacrificed their own ease and wealth to assist their terror stricken and suffering compatriots. That this has been done on a large scale we know, and funds have been loyally raised in Russia and in all the Allied countries to alleviate the miseries caused by the war. While the Relief Funds for Russia and Poland deserve support, it has to be pointed out that where these are distributed, Russian and Polish sufferers have the first claim, and a very small portion only can be disbursed among alien Jews, who, strictly speaking are neither Russians nor Poles, but yet are reckoned as such nationally.

### **Russians Relax the Restrictive Laws against the Jews.**

But apart from moneys raised, the question of finding food and shelter for these millions of poor Jewish refugees must indeed have taxed the Russian authorities to the uttermost. The restrictive laws which did not allow Jews to enter any part of Russia beyond the "Pale" had to be partially relaxed; at first this was said to be only a temporary measure, but now it is hoped that in the longed-for event of decisive victory, the Czar will reconstitute the whole system of administration regarding the Jews, and give civil rights and equality of justice to all his subjects alike, irrespective of creed.

### **Position of the Russian Jews at the present time.**

But to go back to the hapless position of millions of the Jews at the present time—their condition is wretched beyond words! They were not allowed to remain in their own crowded little towns on the approach of the German armies, even had they wished to do so. According to military exigencies, entire districts had to be wholly evacuated, and

nothing of value left for the advancing enemy. Therefore trains upon trains were filled with unfortunate people who were compulsorily deported into the interior of Russia, where no arrangements could be made for their reception. In other parts, we are informed, the miserable civilians had to escape as best they could on foot, and in the rigours of the Russian climate, thousands have died, and are even now dying from exposure, starvation, fatigue and illness.

### **Inhumanity of the "War-lords!"**

We have said that nothing of value was left for the enemy. Whether human lives are to be accounted of value at the present time, and in the opinion of those responsible for the most awful and bloody world-war, is a difficult point to decide! It would seem that a human life on any and every war-zone, if of a non-combatant, is of absolutely no value, for women and children, old men and babies have been cruelly sacrificed to a degree unheard of for generations.

### **"Babykillers'" raids in Britain compared with ravages on the Eastern Front.**

We have had a few examples even on our own shores; some of us have seen, and all of us have read of air-raids and bombardments on civilians, by the "baby-killers." Just extend and enlarge this experience as widely as your imagination can conceive, and in place of "a hundred or so" think of millions, then perhaps you will form some idea of the horrible slaughter of innocent human beings on the eastern war-zone. What the "modern Huns" did with poor helpless Jewish old men, women and children, who had no possessions worth robbing, you may easily conclude from what has been proved beyond a doubt by the record of the Bryce investigations in Belgium. How much greater and more brutal, must be and have been the atrocities on the eastern war-zone, the record of which is more difficult to indite!

### **"What are the Jews to us?"**

Now it may be asked, what are the Jews to us? Some of our readers may say, or at any rate think, that of all the



claims put forth at the present momentous crisis, of all the Funds started for national and philanthropic objects, the one that appeals least of all, and can be the most easily put aside, is that for Polish and Russian Jews. We are ready to make sacrifices for the "Red Cross," for our noble soldiers and sailors, for our Allies, for stricken Belgium, for the widows and orphans in our midst, for our "own favourite gallant Regiment," for the wounded, for prisoners of War, for the "Blue Cross," and even the suffering "lower creation" have their mute appeal! But having loyally "done our bit" for all these, someone starts an appeal for "Russian Jews" we shrug our shoulders, and exclaim that "charity begins at home" and must have its limits. And are we not *par excellence* urged to save our resources?

### What we owe to the Jews.

But think yet again, oh kind and tender-hearted contributor to all the above funds, "What do you owe to the Jews?" Read if you will some few pages of ancient history; read of oriental wars, of the Medes and of the Persians, read of the Greeks and of the Romans, of the ancient Huns, of the Goths and the Visigoths! Were there any Red Cross Nurses among them? Were there Ambulance Departments? How were the wounded and stricken dealt with? Who would have held up hands of horror, and who would have wept tears over the judicial murder of a devoted and patriotic woman? Had any man care for the beasts? Where were Schools, Hospitals, Churches, Chaplains, Y.M.C.A.'s? None of these things were in the ancient world: they all arose with the spread of the Gospel of Christ. Of what nation was He born who stands for ever on the dividing line of all history, and of Whom—whatever view we take of His Personality—it may be averred He alone is the supreme Founder of every humanitarian and philanthropic effort? In the ancient Jewish nation alone were there found any institutions approaching those of Christian civilization? The Jews have admittedly given to the world the Highest Type of self-sacrificing manhood. Not indeed the ideal of the German philosopher, Nietzsche, whose superman is to trample on the weak and exalt himself to World-Empire by use of the "mailed fist" and the



campaign of "frightfulness"—not of him whose keynote is hate; but the Ideal of Him whose Kingdom is founded on the principles of universal love, and whose Reign supernal is to usher in "Peace on earth, goodwill among men"—this Ideal and this Person manifesting it, has been born from the despised Jewish people! Whether you accept this sublime and unrivalled character as an historical Person, or an Ideal, or both in One, He stands as the Head and the inimitable product of that nation—once a unique nationality.

### **Persecutions of the Jews since A.D.**

The original home of the Jewish people was Palestine, from whence they have been driven out, and they have since become the objects of bitter persecution from heathen, Mohammedans, and so-called Christians, ever since the era A.D. Now we see the culmination of these centuries of persecution, and much has arisen from sheer prejudice and misunderstanding on the part of other nations. It is a well-known psychological fact that persistent ill-treatment will embitter an individual or a people, and lead to deterioration of character, and the accumulated cruelties of ages have naturally had their effect on the Jews as a race. The marvel is that they still retain so high a position for intellectual ability and goodness of heart, wherever their surroundings have enabled them to evolve like any other civilised race. They respond more quickly to the influences of philanthropy than any other people, and the gratitude and reciprocation they show towards all who mete out to them the slightest appreciation and sympathy, are undeniable.

### **The Flight of the Jews.**

The story of the homeless Jewish refugees of Russian Poland is but one phase of a great cataclysm of European war sorrows. Yet in itself it is overwhelming, heart-breaking, tragic to the last degree, and the horrors of the siege of Jerusalem cannot be compared with the condition of the Jews at present. The area in which most of them live is known as the Pale of Settlement, which at present forms the war zone.

In the early days of the great war—*i.e.*, the autumn of 1914—German armies crossed their own frontier into Russian Poland, converging from Mława and Przasnysz in the north-west, and Czenstochowa in the south-west toward Warsaw. They entered and traversed areas thickly populated by Jews. Of the civilian Jews, many awaited their new masters, watching with curious eyes the burly figures of German soldiers pass through town and village, but soon to their horror, they discovered the nature and character of these same new masters. Hostages were taken, money demanded, and scores of innocent persons were shot in the streets. Soon the Jews perceived that, considering all the youth of their nation were with the colours, their own safety lay in flight. In the western portion of the country, now held by the German forces, hundreds and thousands of Jews, unable to fly, are still residing, having to adapt themselves, as only Jews can, to new conditions, that may change again to-morrow.

The great mass, however, fled eastwards from the thunder and desolation of war and from the enemy's tyranny and brutality, to the shelter of the reserve lines of Warsaw and of other towns behind the ancient capital. Some Jews fled by military orders before the danger was urgent, and these had time to collect and pack certain belongings and to hire carts and horses and follow the stream of fugitives; while others were left behind until the time was almost up, and thus had to escape with nothing but the clothes they had on. Men, women, and children, strong, weak, healthy and sick, moved now in terrified haste along the narrow roads, across marshy fields, through pine forests, and on railway tracks, with their eyes turned eastwards for there was no other course.

To move north, west, or south would only have brought them to fresh war zones. The great movement of such large numbers thus begun, soon became a disorganized flight; and as it progressed, still spreading eastwards, it was continually augmented by the inhabitants of fresh villages and towns, to whom the tension had become too great to remain in the zone of danger. Even this terrible flight was preferable, with all its difficulties and hardships, to remaining behind, and seeing their women outraged and their old people killed, for the Germans obey neither the laws of God nor man. Besides the above-mentioned

horrors, and the loss of life through shot and shell, which in a war like this is inevitable, new horrors have been added through the devilish use of poisonous gas, which has been employed in the Eastern front on such an unheard-of extensive scale that, we are told, as far as from fifteen to twenty miles behind the actual fighting line, innocent children playing in the streets, women standing talking to each other, old men sitting out to breathe the pure air of heaven, are, without warning, gradually being poisoned by these life-destroying exhalations.

Hundreds of thousands of refugees have been driven from Warsaw, Wilna, Bjalostok, Lubin, Sjedletz Ivangorod, Rovno, Grodno, Lomza, Pinsk, Slonim Shitomir, Minsk, Bobrinsk and Berditscheff. The fall of Warsaw alone involved the flight of 350,000 Jews.

### Relief Urgent.

To do justice to the modern Jewish tragedy would require the pen of Jeremiah, whose heart was torn with anguish as he mourned over the sorrows of his race. His lament, with its piercing pathos, its dirge-like wail, finds echo in the heart of mankind to-day.

My eyes do fail with tears and troubled are my bowels;  
My heart's blood gushes on the earth for the daughter of my people;  
Children and sucking babes lie swooning in the city squares.

They say unto their mothers, Where is corn and wine?  
They swoon as they were wounded in the city squares;  
While glides their soul away into their mother's bosom.

Young children ask for bread and no man breaks it for them,  
Those that fed on dainties are desolate in the streets,  
Those brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills.

Thanks to Christianity, the heart of mankind has become responsive to human suffering in a way unknown in heathen times. To cope with the epidemic of misery among the Russian Jews, help is urgently needed. In consequence of the loyalty which they are showing in the War, Russia has relaxed her restrictions, Poland has been promised Home Rule, and for the Jews this can mean nothing short of political emancipation. In the meantime, what is needed is emancipation from the pangs of hunger, destitution and



misery. The hapless millions of Jews in Russia look to Great Britain as their friend. The champion of the oppressed, the benefactor of subjugated nations, Great Britain will not be deaf to the agonising cry of the starving Hebrews.

It is estimated that a million pounds monthly is required to relieve the sufferings of the refugees. From fifteen to twenty persons can be maintained for a week upon one pound; in other words, one person can be kept alive for twopence halfpenny daily. To deal with this colossal problem it has been found necessary to organise a Russian Jews Relief Fund. Other relief funds exist, but the Jews do not participate in them directly, they receive the crumbs that fall from the philanthropic table. A Fund for their direct relief has become a clamant necessity. How urgent is the necessity is plain from the simple fact that the area in which millions of Jews in Russia are starving is seven times the size of Belgium. To lay this spectre of horror, the organisers of the Relief Fund appeal with confidence to the Christian public. In the words of the late Cardinal Manning, writing of the sufferings of the Jews a quarter of a century ago: "If we know the mind of our Master who prayed for them in His last hour, we owe to them both the justice of the Old Law and the charity of the New."

### **Russian Jews Relief Fund.**

This is a National Fund representative of all denominations in Great Britain, and purely philanthropic in its character. Local Committees have been formed in various places in the United Kingdom. The movement has recently extended to Canada and the United States, where an influential Committee has been formed, with Sir William Mortimer Clark as President. Over £23,000 has been subscribed for relief. All contributions to the fund from the United Kingdom, the Colonies, and Abroad are sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr J. Milne Henderson, C.A., North of Scotland and Town and County Bank, Ltd., 20 Hanover Street, Edinburgh, and are thereafter remitted to Baron Günsburg, Petrograd (through the agency of Messrs N. M. Rothschild & Sons, London), who also administers the "Fund for the Relief of the Jewish Victims of the War in Russia," which



is raised by the Jews amongst themselves. The Committee which has Baron Günsburg at its head is the only body which has been officially recognised by the Russian Government for the distribution of relief funds among the Jewish sufferers of the War in Russia and Poland.

The following account of the work of the distributing centres by Mr S. Lipton gives an idea of the excellent arrangements which have been made:—The Jewish Committee at Petrograd has the direct supervision and control over the relief work among the Jews in Russia. Working with it is a whole network of Committees in over three hundred places where the refugees are being cared for. Everything is being done in systematic fashion. Registration forms are sent to all local committees, and a complete census is taken of the refugees, newcomers as well as those already settled. By means of this, thousands of lost relatives and friends have been found and brought together where possible. Large numbers of inquiries about the whereabouts of refugees are received from America as well as from this country, and already many have been traced. The Jewish Information Bureau of the Petrograd Committee works in harmony and co-operation with the "Russian Bureau," presided over by the Grand Duchess Tatiana Nicolaevna, and all inquiries made to the Bureau about Jewish refugees are referred to the Jewish Committee.

The relief work is mapped out according to provinces and counties, and provincial centres are established. The Committee at Moscow has the care of about a dozen provinces (Gouvernments); the Odessa Committee is in charge of the whole of Bessarabia, while the Kieff Committee has the provinces of Kieff, Podol, and Velinsk. Vilna, before German occupation, was also one of the chief centres of relief. The uniting centre is the Petrograd Committee. In as many as one hundred and forty-three towns, there are local committees who work either under the direct supervision of the Tax Committee at Petrograd or the Provincial Central body. The Local Committees see to the needs of the refugees, obtain grants from the central bodies, and distribute the relief funds. But in many small towns where refugees have come, it is not possible to have a Committee, and, instead, a representative is elected who has charge

of the refugees. In one hundred and sixty-two places the Petrograd Committee has accredited representatives, who present detailed accounts of their expenditure. Altogether, the Petrograd Committee sent help to three hundred and forty-eight places in European Russia and Siberia.

### Food Depots.

Soup kitchens and dining halls were opened, where there was a great influx of refugees. Money tickets of the value of ten to twenty ko-pecks per day were also distributed, and stores were opened where food could be obtained at cheap prices. At these stores the money-tickets were exchanged for food. Food grants were made to the Local Committees. Thus Minsk, with 30,000 refugees, received 150,000 roubles; while Poltava and Mariupol, each with 2,500 refugees, received 14,000 roubles. These are only examples. Of the sums asked for by the Local Committees, only a small percentage could be granted to most urgent cases.

### Clothing.

According to the reports received, it was found that out of every four refugees, three were in need of warm clothes and boots to protect them against the rigours of the Russian winter. The clothing was purchased in large quantities, and it worked out at fifteen roubles per outfit for a person. The applications for clothing grants could only partially be entertained. From September to 1st November, 525,000 roubles were assigned for this purpose to committees looking after 105,000 refugees.

In one place, Tavrida, with 7,500 refugees, only 5,000 roubles were spent, for children of school age.

Here, again, it was only a few of the delicate women and tender children who could be provided for.

### Lodgings.

The refugees at first crowded for shelter in the school-rooms and in the synagogues. This was unhealthy, it had a demoralising effect on the mass of refugees. The

Committee endeavoured to find private apartments, with fuel. The cost of such an apartment was on the average of two roubles per month, while in some places it was three roubles. In September and October nearly 100,000 roubles were spent on providing lodgings and fuel.

### Work.

Special delegates of the Committee visited the various relief centres to investigate the question of employment for the refugees. Workshops and factories were opened for tailoring, bootmaking, basket-making and embroidery work. At many of these factories army equipments were made. Labour bureaus were opened, and work obtained for thousands of the refugees. Workshops for seamstresses were opened for women, while at several places trade schools were set up for children. Tools and machinery were bought, and numerous refugees were soon able to do without any assistance from the Committee's funds.

### Medical Help.

It is not surprising that with all the hardships and agonies the refugees had to undergo, their health should have suffered. The question of medical assistance was a difficult one; but the Petrograd Committee did everything possible to lessen the sufferings.

The medical work was distributed in twenty-two divisions, and the sphere of activities was extended to all provinces whither Jewish refugees had come. A staff of one hundred and forty doctors and nurses have been attending about 60,000 of the refugees. Twelve hospitals and forty-five ambulances were arranged. In addition, there are thirty train divisions of medical workers who follow the trail of the refugees and attend to their requirements.

### Credit Relief.

Thousands of refugees, it was found, were able, with the help of a small loan, to become independent of the Committee's funds by resuming their former occupations as artisans or small manufacturers. To this class of people



the Committee at Petrograd decided to grant loans and so save them from the demoralising influence of continually receiving help. Existing loan and saving banks were utilised wherever possible. An arrangement was made that the Committee accept responsibility for seventy-five per cent. of the sum advanced to the borrower. A special Board of Credit was appointed for this object, and the Committee have organised credit relief in thirty-five places so far, and arrangements are now being made for other towns.

### Good Wishes and Appreciations.

The Russian Jews Relief Fund is in direct communication with the Jewish Committee in Petrograd presided over by Baron Günsburg. In a letter which the Committee received from Baron Günsburg acknowledging the first donation of £3,000 from the Fund, he says, "It is with the most profound gratitude that we receive this beautiful gift from the Christian public of Great Britain, and I beg you in the name of my Committee to tell your Colleagues of the National Committee that this sign of moral solidarity will throw a soft ray of light over the darkness which Russian Judaism is passing through at this moment, but we are awaiting with confidence for better days. . . . We know very well how much each of us is involved in all the troubles of the War, but we are happy in proving that the old traditions of the philanthropy of your country survive all these calamities." In a further letter, dated the 20th of January, Baron Günsburg, looking forward to the Jewish passover, wrote again a letter to our Committee in which he says, "As Passover or Easter is the emblem of brotherhood between human beings, we believe that in helping the Jews on that occasion, we are once again acting in the spirit of the Christian public of Great Britain. You are, of course, aware that the Jewish creed is very strict in the observance of the prescribed Passover ritual, and they will be full of deep-felt gratitude when they hear that this help comes from the Allies of a different creed from over the sea."

Mr Leopold de Rothschild writes: "I shall be glad if you will take an early opportunity of expressing to your Committee the sincere gratitude of us all for their noble



efforts to help those poor people and for the generous assistance you have secured in Scotland and also in England and Ireland." Writing again on the 15th of March, Mr Rothschild says that while this war lasts the only consolation one gets is just the way your Committee is endeavouring to help our people in Russia, in their whole-hearted efforts of charity and good works.

The Committee is also glad to have received appreciative letters, full of good wishes, from His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, His Grace the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of London, the Marquis of Linlithgow, the Earl of Elgin, Lord Bryce, Lord Kinnaird, Lord Reading, the Right Hon. Herbert Samuel, and many others.

We, therefore, confidently hope that our appeal to the British public on behalf of these sufferers will meet with a hearty response; especially when we consider that our gracious Lord, who now sitteth at the Right Hand of God, and who has sanctified humanity, according to the flesh, came of the Jews, and so have the Apostles and Prophets, and the sweet singers of Israel, who have all enriched our lives by giving us what we hold dearest and best.

## Will You Help the Down-trodden Jews?

The Committee earnestly appeal for Contributions on behalf of a people whose loyalty to the country of their adoption, is of special interest to us in this crisis.

Contributions should be sent to—

J. Milne Henderson, Esq., C.A., Hon. Treasurer, North of Scotland and Town and County Bank, Ltd., 20 Hanover Street, Edinburgh, or to

Messrs Barclay & Co., Ltd., Bankers, 54 Lombard Street, London, E.C.

Cheques should be made payable to the "Russian Jews Relief Fund."

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religion, but have also been the means in God's hand of preserving it through many dark days. Others would have thought only of themselves, the Jews first thought was the conserving of the law of God. During the centuries since then, the Bible and no small number of Jewish messengers

have been the means of true progress. Yet think of the ages of persecution they have had to contend with, Wherever hunger and great disasters struck the nations amongst whom they live, the Jews suffered most. Of all the tragedies on this earth, surely theirs is one that surpasses them all! No earthly voice seems to rise on their behalf, no King! no Prince! to represent them. Do you not hear the heavenly voice? *The King of Kings* is appealing, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Let the bleeding hearts of millions of Jewish mothers know other feelings than pain. Let the voice of Israel not only speak in a sigh, but may they amidst all this horror through which they are passing, still be able to say:—Blessed be the name of the Lord, for His redeemed children, who in His name came forward and helped us in our affliction. Let therefore the Jewish mothers be able to give their children something more than tears! Also by helping them now in their dire need, you may be sure that in days to come, the ever-grateful hearts of these people will always remember that when they and their children were hungry, you fed them, and when they were naked, you clothed them.

We are convinced that our country's past greatness in the hands of God, has in part been due to our generous and Christian treatment to this race, and we believe that by doing what we can for them now, greater blessings, even than those of the past, will come to us, for has not God said, "He that blesses thee, him will I bless."

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The Appeal on behalf of the        ::        ::        ::  
RUSSIAN JEWS RELIEF FUND  
has been approved and signed by the following:—

J. E. Wellen

Louis Charles, Bishop of Salford.

F. J. Wapoor Whornden.

W. R. Handall Als. Council

John Green Alfred Mordaunt  
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